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USSR Report

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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5 DECEMBER 1986

USSR REPORT
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

CONTENTS

WORLDWIDE TOPICS

Briefs

- Guests Follow Silk Route in Kazakhstan 1

EASTERN EUROPE

- History of USSR-Albanian Ties Recalled, Improvement Urged
(Moscow in Albanian to Albania, 4, 9 Nov 86) 2
- USSR Aid Before, After Liberation, Editorial 2
Soviet Friendship Stressed, by Aleksandr Nikolayev 4
- Albanian Leader Alia's Speech to AWP Congress Quoted
(PRAVDA, 6 Nov 86) 6
- Russian Translation, Summary of Hungarian Book on 1956 Events
(S. Dardykin; IZVESTIYA, 2 Nov 86) 9
- Soviet News Media Recall 1956 Hungarian Uprising, USSR Role
(Moscow Television Service, 3 Nov 86; PRAVDA, 4 Nov 86) . 19
- TV Report, by E. Shirokov 19
PRAVDA Correspondent's Report, by V. Gerasimov 19

CHINA/FAR EAST/PACIFIC

- Chinese Economic Statistics Cited, Performance Appraised
(G. Arslanov; EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA, No 45, Nov 86) 21
- Briefs
- PRC Friendship Delegation in Kazakhstan 23

MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA/SOUTH ASIA

U.S. 'Neoglobalist' Aims in Middle East Assailed (R. Markaryan; IZVESTIYA, 23 Oct 86)	24
Central Asian Journal on Gulf War, Problems for Iran, Iraq (Aleksandr Kudinov; ZVEZDA VOSTOKA, No 7, 1986)	27
PDRY Said Successful in Overcoming Effects of 'Tragic Events' (M. Kozhevnikov; IZVESTIYA, 27 Oct 86)	38
USSR Publication Views Situation in Oman (M. Petrov; NEW TIMES, No 42, 27 Oct 86)	40

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Speculations on Circumstances of Machel's Death Expressed (IZVESTIYA, 30 Oct, 4 Nov 86)	42
Reason for Crash Questioned, by L. Shinkarev Washington, Pretoria Involvement Alleged, by B. Pilyatskin	42 43

/9986

WORLDWIDE TOPICS

BRIEFS

GUESTS FOLLOW SILK ROUTE IN KAZAKHSTAN--A group of tourists from the U.S., England, Holland, Switzerland, Denmark and Japan, who are making a trip along a new route--to the places where in ancient times the "Great Silk Route" traversed--visited Alma-Ata and Alma-Ata Oblast. The guests made an excursion through the capital of the republic and visited the Central State Museum of the Kazakh SSR, the "Medeo" sports complex and the rest area "Kazakh Aul" and sampled national cooking in the city's restaurants. On 14 October the guests left Alma-Ata. They are visiting Taldy-Kurgansk Oblast. Further along their trip will take them through the territory of the Chinese People's Republic. [Excerpts] [Alma-Ata KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 15 Oct 86 p 3]

CSO: 1807/63

EASTERN EUROPE

HISTORY OF USSR-ALBANIAN TIES RECALLED, IMPROVEMENT URGED

USSR Aid Before, After Liberation

AU091938 Moscow in Albanian to Albania 1530 GMT 4 Nov 86

[PRAVDA editorial article: "Fifty-five Years of the AWP"]

[Text] On 8 November 1941 in Tirana, under conditions of deep illegality, 15 delegates representing three communist groups met and adopted a decision concerning the founding of the Albanian Communist Party. That important event was preceded by the entire course of the development of the democratic workers and revolutionary movement in Albania following the GOSR. Soviet Russia's denunciation of the secret imperialist treaties, including the 1915 London Treaty to partition Albania gave a powerful impetus to the struggle of the Albanian people for independence and the country's territorial integrity. The June 1924 Revolution, which was anti-feudal and anti-imperialist in nature, was an integral part of the general revolutionary fervor in Albania after the victory of Great October. Following its suppression in Albania, Zog's reactionary regime was established, attempting to hinder through terror the development of the revolutionary movement and the dissemination of communist ideas. But police persecutions could not defeat the Albanian patriots, and could not break their will to struggle.

The Soviet Union has always declared its solidarity with the people of Albania at all stages of their struggle for national and social liberation. Toward the end of the twenties, a communist group was formed by Albanian revolutionaries who had found their salvation from the persecutions of Zog's regime in the Soviet Union. Returning to Albania later on, they carried out a great effort for the organizational strengthening of communist groups. Trade unions of construction workers, textile workers, oil workers, and workers of other categories who had united in the struggle for their political and economic rights were created under the influence of the communists. The most distinguished event was their participation in the anti-Zog Fier uprising in August 1955. As Ali Kelemndi [Albanian communist veteran] stated, this was the baptism of fire for the Albanian communists. They passed that test honorably, he stated, and showed themselves to be worthy brethren of communists in other countries.

Following Albania's occupation by the fascist army in 1939, the communists engaged themselves actively in the struggle against foreign invaders and internal reaction. The Albanian Communist Party united all antifascist forces in the National Liberation Front and placed itself at the head of the struggle for the country's liberation. In their armed struggle the Albanian people made a valuable contribution to the general cause of the peace-loving peoples in the defeat of fascism.

After the victory of the people's democratic revolution, which was attained in 1944 under the leadership of the Albanian Communist Party and under the conditions of the triumphant offensive of the Soviet Army in the Balkans, the party and the country were confronted with the very severe tasks of liquidating the destruction of war and the semi-feudal backwardness, and of building the new society. The political, economic, and cultural links between the Soviet Union and Albania, which during that period were marked by a strong development on the basis of complete equality and mutually beneficial cooperation, helped to resolve them successfully.

The first Congress of the Communist Party of Albania, which was held in November 1948, approved the party's general line for the construction of socialism in close cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. The Congress adopted the decision of changing the party's name calling it the AWP. During its 45 years of activity the AWP became the vanguard of the Albanian people. Under its leadership, the people's democratic revolution triumphed and the construction of the bases of socialism was completed.

As is stated in the materials of the Ninth AWP Congress, the fulfillment of the tasks of the seventh quinquennium promoted the country's progress on the road of socialist construction.

The major task in the eighth quinquennial is established as the further consolidation and perfecting of the socialist order, the raising of the material and cultural standards of the working people.

At the beginning of the sixties, an abnormal and unnatural atmosphere for relations between socialist countries fell over Soviet-Albanian relations. Unfortunately, a negative attitude toward relations with the Soviet Union was reiterated at the Ninth AWP Congress. Opinion in the Soviet is that even if causes may have existed in the past, making for the deterioration of relations between our country and Albania, such causes are now absent. The Soviet Union is for regularizing Soviet-Albanian relations on the basis of strict respect for equality, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and noninterference in each other's internal affairs.

Speaking in Sofia in October 1984, Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev stressed: Our country is for the normalization of relations with the People's Socialist Republic of Albania. If both sides show goodwill, this question could be resolved in the interests of both peoples, both states, and in the interest of the cause of peace and socialism.

Today, on the 45th anniversary of the founding of the AWP, the Soviet people congratulate the Albanian working people on the occasion of this marked day and sincerely wish them new successes in the construction of socialism.

Soviet Friendship Stressed

AU100954 Moscow in Albanian to Albania 1530 GMT 9 Nov 86

[Commentary by Aleksandr Nikolayev]

[Summary from poor reception] "Dear friends, as is well known, the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and Albania were for many years bound by ties of friendship, which were created at the time when the first groups of Albanian communists were formed. Since that period, our country has always supported the patriotic forces of Albania. In complete unanimity, the April plenum of the AWP Central Committee in 1957 noted in its resolutions that without the Soviet Union there would not have been a free, independent, and sovereign Albania. These words define the role of the Soviet Union in the formation and the development of the new Albanian republic.

"Let us turn to history. The Soviet Union, relying on the principles of proletarian internationalism, shouldered the whole burden of the struggle for the defense of national interests in the international arena. Through the help of its strong position, Albania was added to the Paris Peace Conference in 1946. At the same time she was accepted as a full participant in the anti-Hitler coalition. As a result of this, she was accorded a worthy place in the peace treaty with Italy. Through the aid of the efforts of the Soviet Union the claims of the Greek chauvinists to southern Albania were rejected. We may also remember the so-called Corfu incident, when in October 1946 two British cruisers collided with mines in the waters of these straits. The efforts of Britain to discredit the Albanian Government, to accuse them of aggression, were frustrated to a large extent precisely through the help of the Soviet Union's efforts. Our country used its veto in the UN Security Council, despite the efforts of Britain to accuse Albania of crimes against humanity. Through the activities of the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of Albania was accepted into the UN. The Soviet Union consistently defended the interests of the new republic in other international matters which were then of exceptionally vital importance. In the first place let us mention the economic cooperation with our country."

The Soviet Union and the People's Republic of Albania conducted trade and technical-scientific exchanges to the mutual benefit of the two countries. Thousands of Albanian scientists, technical workers and engineers were trained with the help of our specialists. Many Albanians studied in the Soviet Union. Many new industrial plants were built, including textile combines, laying the foundations of industrial development. In 1957, the Soviet Government handed over to the Albanian state

all the industrial installations which had been built with its help up to that time. Major assistance was also given to Albania in the sphere of education. The first Albanian university was founded with the Soviet help, and the first theatrical performances staged, all a convincing witness to the fruitful cooperation of our two countries in these fields.

"In appreciating the role of the Soviet Union in the development of Albania, the Fourth AWP Congress stressed, the help and support of the Soviet Union was one of the most important external factors in attaining our successes in socialist construction. Unfortunately, the fruitful Albanian-Soviet cooperation was broken off at the beginning of the 60s."

Since then the Soviet Union has always favored the improvement of relations between our two countries. As Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev, CPSU Central Committee general secretary, said at the 27th CPSU Congress, the CPSU is for honest and open relations with all communist parties, and for the sincere exchange of opinions among them.

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CSO: 2100/10

EASTERN EUROPE

ALBANIAN LEADER ALIA'S SPEECH TO AWP CONGRESS QUOTED

PM071625 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 6 Nov 86 First Edition p 5

[Unattributed report: "On the Work of the Ninth Albanian Workers Party Congress"]

[Text] R. Alia, first secretary of the Albanian Workers Party [AWP] Central Committee, has delivered the keynote report at the Ninth AWP Congress, which has opened in Tirana.

After dwelling on Albania's socioeconomic development in the Seventh 5-Year Plan, he noted that the main political, economic, and social tasks outlined by the Eighth AWP Congress have in the main been fulfilled. Albania is entering a new 5-year plan with a more developed material and technical base. During those years the social product increased by approximately 19 percent compared with the Sixth 5-Year Plan, and gross industrial output rose by 27 percent. Despite unfavorable climatic conditions for 3 successive years, the volume of gross agricultural output over the 5 years increased by over 13 percent. During the 5-year plan more than 300 important production and sociocultural facilities were commissioned.

The paramount task in the new 5-year plan is still to accelerate the development of industry, the speaker pointed out. More than 10 billion leks, or 42 percent of the total capital investment, will be channeled into this. Gross industrial output in 1990 will be 29-31 percent higher than the 1985 figure. While continuing to give priority to producing means of production, we shall also develop consumer goods production at an accelerated rate. Agriculture has an increasing role to play in developing the country, improving the people's well-being, and eliminating the socioeconomic discrepancies between the city and the countryside. Around 7.7 billion leks, or one-third of the total investment, will be invested in this sector. Gross agricultural output will rise by 35-37 percent during the 5-year plan. On this basis the population's living standard will rise and education, culture, and health care will be further developed.

The draft directives envisage, R. Alia stressed, that by 1990 the social product will be 30-31 percent higher than in 1985, that national income will be 35-37 percent higher, and that the average annual growth rate of the economy will be 5-7 percent.

The fulfillment of the new 5-year plan's tasks is based on important structural reorganizations in the economy. The broad potential offered by flexibility in the distribution of capital investments and manpower and in the use of other resources make it possible to ensure high rates of development in certain sectors. In agriculture special support will be given to developing stockraising.

The AWP has always considered the petroleum industry to be the key sector of the national economy. Our state has made and will continue to make every effort to develop that sector. An important role in the energy balance is played by natural gas, whose extraction is to increase 160 percent in the new 5-year plan. Coal production will increase during those years by about 1 million metric tons.

Around 74 percent of the growth in industrial production will be achieved by making better use of the existing production capacities and by modernizing and expanding them and only one-fourth will be achieved by commissioning new production capacities. In agriculture 95 percent of the increase in output will be achieved at the existing processing facilities by increasing yields. In accordance with party policy, the economy will take another step toward intensification.

For 10 years now Albania has been self-sufficient in grain, the speaker stressed. This is an achievement of historic importance and a mainstay of the country's economic independence. The party's policy is aimed at achieving the harmonious development of all districts and at reducing the discrepancies between the plains and the mountain zones.

Economic development during the Eighth 5-Year Plan, R. Alia pointed out, will make it possible to increase the accumulation funds and expand consumer goods production. According to the present preliminary projections, the proportion of the national economy channeled into accumulation will be around 28 percent and the proportion earmarked for consumption will increase almost twice as fast as the population. The population's purchasing power will increase--retail commodity turnover will grow by 25 percent. Rural workers' real incomes will increase almost twice as fast as those of urban workers. There will be a considerable increase in social consumption funds, around 85,000 apartments and houses will be built, and the pension system will be improved.

Assessing the plans for Albania's socioeconomic development, R. Alia noted, we may conclude that during the 5-year period which has begun Albania will take an important step along the path of transformation into an industrial-agrarian country.

The speaker went on to say that the party has been and remains the reliable guarantor of the country's socialist development. It now has almost 147,000 members. Since the Seventh AWP Congress around 6,000 people a year on average have been admitted as candidate members of the party. Of those around 80 percent are workers, more than 70 percent are young people, and 40 percent are women. This has led to an improvement in the party's social composition. The ideological-political and professional standard of cadres is rising. In 1985 the number of specialists with secondary or higher education was 53 percent up on 1980.

Speaking about party work, R. Alia noted that in every district there are primary party organizations working with initiative and successfully fulfilling their tasks. Lively discussions are being held there in an atmosphere of criticism and self-criticism and the fulfillment of decisions is being monitored. The need to step up the campaign against bureaucracy has been highlighted as an important task.

R. Alia said that an integrated education system has been created in the country. The party's instructions on combining education with productive labor and physical and military training and on improving the forms and methods of teaching have generally been fulfilled. He stressed the great role of literature and art in the people's education and of science in resolving the topical problems of the country's economic and social development.

In the report's foreign policy section R. Alia advocated ending the arms race and the testing and production of nuclear weapons and opposed the militarization of space. However, on the basis of the farfetched thesis of the "equal responsibility" of the United States and the USSR for the aggravation of the international situation, he cast doubt on the conferences and meetings being held within the framework of the Helsinki process.

Albania, the speaker went on to state, advocates the development of friendly relations with a number of West European countries (France, Greece, Italy, Turkey, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, and other Scandinavian countries) and with the African, Asian, and Latin American states with which it maintains diplomatic relations, and advocates normal interstate relations with the socialist countries, primarily in the trade and economic sphere. At the same time he expounded Albania's familiar negative position on the question of settling relations with the Soviet Union.

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CSO: 1807/57

EASTERN EUROPE

RUSSIAN TRANSLATION, SUMMARY OF HUNGARIAN BOOK ON 1956 EVENTS

PM061537 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Nov 86 Morning Edition

[2 Nov 86 p 5]

[Part one of two-part article by S. Dardykin: "The Failure of Operation 'Focus'"]

[Text] Budapest is beautiful in the fall. The leaves of the giant plane trees gradually drop onto the asphalt below. The air is warm and translucent. Having grown rather shallow as the fall approaches, the Danube lazily licks the stone steps of the embankment. The lowest step, at the very edge of the water, has been chosen as a favorite haunt by young men and women. They remember the city as always having been like this--peaceful, elegant, invariably festive. It is only the older generations of Budapest who remember other, difficult days....

On 8 September 1954 the "Free Europe" committee founded in New York approved a document entitled "Directive No 15, Hungary, Operation 'Focus.'" And so began direct preparation for a counterrevolutionary revolt in Hungary....

A considerable number of propaganda myths surrounding the events in Hungary in 1956 have been created in the West. One of these myths, to which bourgeois interpreters of the past cling particularly strongly, is based on the claim that these events were the result of a spontaneous "popular movement" which was neither prepared nor coordinated from outside. But what in fact actually happened? A book by Janos Berecz, eminent Hungarian historian and secretary of the MSZMP Central Committee, which has also been published in Russian, provides an answer to this question by showing the counterrevolution in two dimensions. (Footnote) (J. Berecz. "The Failure of Operation 'Fokus': Counterrevolution by Pen and Weapon" [Krakh operatsii "Fokus": kontrrevolyutsiya perom i oruzhiyem]. Translated from the Hungarian. Moscow, Political Literature Publishing House, 1986, 255 pages). Demarcated geographically by the borders of one country and chronologically by the period from the end of October to the beginning of November 1956, it was an integral part of strategic schemes for an offensive by the reaction directed against the forces of socialism and peace. And preparations for it began long before the plan for Operation "Focus" was engendered deep within the American special services.

From the concept of "containing" world communism--a concept later criticized by its own theoreticians for its "excessive passivity and defensive nature," --to the "more dynamic" (in this case greater dynamism should be interpreted as unconcealed aggression) doctrine of "liberation"--step by step, revanchist ideas and plans to undermine the postwar status quo and restore capitalism in the countries of Eastern Europe were being nurtured. According to the well known American diplomat G.F. Kennan, who later earned the reputation of a moderate politician in the West but who, in the fifties, was a most active proponent of "cold war," the doctrine of "liberation" pursued the aim of overthrowing the socialist system both in the USSR and in countries with a people's democracy. How? He provided the answer himself: "The stimuli necessary for this must come from us, that is, from outside, and not from within the Soviet sphere." In other words--open interference in internal affairs. Kennan's compatriot, General D. Sarnoff actually proposes specific measures in his book "Program for an Offensive Against World Communism"--terrorist actions, the intensification of hostile propaganda, broad support for illegal forces...

Words were backed up by deeds. In 1949 the organization "Crusade For Freedom" sprang up in the immediate vicinity of Washington government offices. The "Free Europe" committee was adjacent to it, instantly developing a ramified system of services and subdivisions. C.D. Jackson, the director at that time of one of these subdivisions--"Radio Free Europe"--did not even consider it necessary to conceal anything about the real purpose of Radio Free Europe and frankly said in an interview with THE NEW YORK TIMES: "Our aim is to create the conditions for internal disorder in those countries reached by our broadcasts."

Governmental and paragonmental organizations in the United States formed a core while around the periphery there clustered every possible kind of private "agency" and "foundation" and reactionary emigre "union" also impatient to do battle. "Armed violence alone can open up the path for a return to their motherland by Hungarians who have lost their home and we are right to hope that, with the development of world events, strategic U.S. forces will be able to open up this way for us," the fascist Hungarian emigre newspaper HADAK UTJAN wrote in May 1950. The bellicose ardor of former Horthy and Nyilas Party fighters was fanned by Washington. In his preelection speech the future U.S. president D. Eisenhower gave fascist emigre groups a direct promise that he would do everything possible to "liberate the suffering and oppressed Hungarians."

An analogous plan under the code name "Veto"--aimed at Czechoslovakia--was developed in parallel to Operation "Focus." Poland remained a constant target for subversive services and also other countries with a people's democracy. And so why was Hungary the "focus" of attention for Western subversive centers in the mid-fifties? The book gives a detailed answer to this question.

Firm foundations of people's power had been laid in Hungary as a result of the bourgeois system being overthrown. In 1949, of the 402 deputies forming the newly elected parliament 176 were workers and 115, peasants. During the period 1949-1953 a total of 50,000 workers and peasants were promoted to leading posts in production collectives, ministries, and the Army.

By 1956 industry accounted for almost 60 percent of the national income. The volume of industrial output had trebled in comparison with the prewar level. One-third of all sown land in the country and virtually all machine stock was in the hands of the socialist sector. In those years Hungary had 40,000 students, more than half of whom were of worker and peasant stock....

However, at the beginning of the fifties the country's development had ceased to be unequivocally progressive. Serious errors had come to light in the policy of the Hungarian Workers Party (HWP), which had a negative impact on every aspect of life. The sectarian-dogmatic line pursued by the HWP leadership, which had come to believe in its infallibility, and its administrative-bureaucratic style frightened people off and led to violations of socialist legality. M. Rakosi's personality cult in addition to the false thesis that there must be a constant, justifiable exacerbation of the class struggle in the period of building socialism, led to an atmosphere of universal mistrust.

In the first half of 1949, the author writes, L. Rajk and a number of prominent party workers were sentenced on the basis of false charges. After the "Rajk affair" arrests and trials followed one after the other. The leaders of the Communist Party in its underground period--J. Kadar, G. Kallai, and others--were subjected to persecution in particular. The intensified hunt for "enemies" within party ranks diverted strength and attention away from the struggle against surviving and still concealed hostile elements.

Voluntarism and subjectivism in leadership prevented any proper solution to economic tasks. The slogan used in those years "Let us turn Hungary into a country of iron and steel" most graphically reflected the imbalance in economic development. The majority of resources were channelled into ferrous metallurgy and the mining industry, while there were not even enough means to furnish other sectors of heavy industry with up-to-date equipment.

The unrealistic, unsubstantiated nature of this economic policy was also evidenced by the constant amendments to plan targets in the direction of setting them too high. The targets for the first 5-year plan were raised in 1951--that is, 1 year after they had been approved--to almost double their previous level, including in heavy industry, where the production volume was to be increased by 280 percent instead of the earlier planned 104 percent.

Blatant errors in economic policy were particularly strongly felt in agriculture. In Spring 1953 more than 10 percent of the country's plowland had not been sown. The principle of voluntariness was violated in the collectivization process, which was caused by the desire to complete the socialist reorganization of the countryside in the space of 3 or 4 years. The very idea of

agricultural cooperatives was thereby compromised in the eyes of the working peasantry. As a whole, these major errors in the economy could not fail to have an adverse impact on the working people's living standards and attitude.

The party leadership attempted to find ways to resolve these problems--which were becoming exacerbated--basically by following the same course which had originally led to them. There arose a great breach between word and deed, and between declared political aims and reality. A struggle began between different factions in the leadership. The Rakosi-Gero group proved incapable of rectifying its mistakes but continued to hold onto power in every way possible. At the same time, the revisionist group led by I. Nagy began to take shape in the middle of 1953 and grew progressively stronger.

The West noticed the lack of unity within the HWP leadership and its lack of confidence in its political course, and naturally it was well informed of the fact that hostile elements were stepping up their operations. Analyzing the situation in Hungary, the "Free Europe" committee reached the conclusion that the time had come to begin overt subversive action.

On Friday 1 October 1954, at a command from across the ocean, hundreds of balloons were launched into the air in Hungary, carrying leaflets with "Free Europe's" program for the "national resistance movement." This unprecedented subversive action and the American note which followed in answer to the Hungarian Government's protest and which basically repeated the 12 points of the national resistance movement program served as a signal to all forces involved in Operation "Focus." "Radio Free Europe" broadcasters began working flat out. Internal reactionaries and fascist emigres became more active. In March 1955 a special conference of the "union of Hungarian brothers-in-arms" was convened in Cologne, which approved the plan of action entitled "Purification" aimed at forming a unified, armed organization made up of emigres "who love the nation." A broad operation was begun to infiltrate into Hungary emissaries who had received special training in U.S. intelligence centers. In the first 3 months of 1956 the Hungarian border service recorded 191 instances of people illegally crossing the border from Austria, 320 instances from April through June, and 438 in August alone.

Bourgeois historians back up their thesis that the events of autumn 1956 "spontaneously developed into a revolution" with claims that no substantial, and still less any organized forces took part in preparing the revolt. These fabrications are refuted by data cited in J. Berecz's book, an analysis of which allows him to draw the conclusion that approximately 250 illegal organizations and groupings were involved in preparing and carrying out the counter-revolutionary action.

The activities of the military-subversive group, the "White Partisans," tellingly show toward whom internal reaction was oriented and from which quarters it expected support. All of the group's plans were based on the calculation that there would soon be a war in Hungary which would lead to the country being occupied by Americans. The "White Partisans" carefully prepared to receive the "liberators"--they selected areas suitable for the landing of transport planes and parachutists, and identity cards and armbands with English-language wording were prepared well in advance.

Other subversive groups "independently" marshalled their forces: the "Hungarian Resistance Movement," the "National Resistance Movement," the "Sword and Cross," the "White Guard," the "(Botond) division," and also the clerical underground and the vestiges of former bourgeois parties.... Their "independence" mainly consisted in the fact that they received instructions directly, via couriers from Western intelligence services. Internal reactionaries prepared themselves in expectation of a signal to attack.

Assessing the situation in Hungary, the West reached the conclusion that it was nevertheless preferable to "rely" not on the inveterate reactionaries, but on I. Nagy's revisionist group which was rapidly gathering momentum. Applying themselves to problems which really existed, supporters of the "right-wing tendency" proclaimed outwardly attractive slogans, such as "improving socialism" and "purifying democracy" while in actual fact skillfully disguising its hostile agitation, incitement, and deliberate fanning of dissatisfaction. In whatever connection I. Nagy discussed the nature of state power, he always denied the leading role of the working class. At first covertly, and then increasingly openly, he formulated a program to sever Hungary from the alliance of socialist countries--and primarily from the USSR--proposing instead a course of tacking between East and West. Many were disoriented by the fact that Nagy had been part of the Hungarian communist movement for 4 decades, had worked in the Comintern, and was also the first to publicly criticize Rakosi's mistakes. But the main thing was that the activity of the "party opposition leader" was growing against a background of deepening difficulties in the country.

The most serious problem was the leadership's inability to evaluate the state of affairs. The first secretary of the HWP Central Committee called the reports made by state security organs in autumn 1956 regarding the hostile actions which were then in preparation, the "nightmare visions of a sick person." The alarm of ordinary party members concerning possible counterrevolutionary sorties met with the following response: "We will be able to crush this kind of action in 30 minutes." The measures introduced on 20 October to increase the combat readiness of the Army and internal security troops were called to a halt after a day. The helplessness of the leadership finally became clear to the enemy and the opposition. The reactionaries made their decision: The hour had come for an open offensive.

[3 Nov 86 p 5]

[Final part of S. Dardykin article under the "Pages of History" rubric: "The Failure of Operation 'Focus': On the Book by Janos Berecz and the Events of 30 Years Ago Which It Describes"]

[Text] J. Berecz writes in the book "The Failure of Operation 'Focus'" that from the very outset the general staff of the 1956 counterrevolution in Hungary was represented by "Free Europe," which in turn received daily directives from across the ocean. Its studios broadcast instructions to the insurgents on what political demands to make and prescriptions were issued on what constituted the "optimal" composition of the "government of national unit."

Very significantly, a message from President D. Eisenhower was cited: "America is wholeheartedly on the Hungarian people's side." Later on, when the situation was near to boiling point, J. Borsany, a former Horthyist officer using the pseudonym "Colonel Bela," was to guide the armed actions from Radio Free Europe's microphones.

By the evening of 23 October the insurgents, taking cover behind a student demonstration, began to storm the radio building. At approximately 1900 hours the counterrevolutionaries seized several buses and afterward began to transport the "demonstrators" to various sites using trucks and buses. An arms plant, the international telephone center, and the editorial office of the newspaper SZABAD NEP were occupied and the shipyards in Obuda and other enterprises were attacked. The thorough preparation of the actions is indicated by the fact that the blows were struck with precision against the most important targets. The insurgents' groups were headed by people who understood the finer points of street fighting--former Horthyist officers, members of Arrow Cross [Hungarian fascist party], and police.

The well organized counterrevolutionary forces immediately found support among declassé elements and criminals. From 25 through 31 October 9,962 ordinary criminals and 3,324 political prisoners, including spies and conspirators, were released from jails opened by the insurgents and were immediately given weapons.

However, people who had simply been duped also became embroiled in the events. They were ensnared by the revisionists' brash appeals and actually wanted just one thing--to rectify past mistakes. The responsibility for deceiving them, for ruining their lives, and often for their death rests with the party opposition with its demagogic ideology and propaganda. Young people made up a considerable proportion of those on the side of the counterrevolutionary who were unaware of its true aims. With astonishing cynicism the ringleaders of the rebellion and agitators from "Free Europe" selfishly used the political immaturity of young people, adolescents, and even children. It is significant that for many of them even the very first days were to be a sobering up period: "We did not want this."

The counterrevolutionary rebellion came as a surprise to the forces of socialism in Hungary and caught them unawares. Virtually no garrison in Budapest was combat capable. The situation was aggravated by the fact that some key posts in the army and the internal affairs organs were held by overt traitors. The supreme party leadership did not immediately give a clear assessment of the events. The confusion reigning in the party's supreme organ is demonstrated by the following fact. A report received from Budapest's third district announced that communists were ready for battle. However, the Central Committee received instructions containing the direct opposite. At first it was recommended that "comrades should go home," then that they should "go among the masses and engage in agitation." The majority of Central Committee members were utterly unsure about what should be done: whether to suppress the insurgents by armed force or try to "lead the masses." The remnants of the Rakosi-Gero group showed their impotence and lack of will during those tragic days for the country.

On the night of 24 October a Central Committee plenum was held which, guided by the desire to ensure the broadest unity so as to quell the counterrevolution, coopted I. Nagy and members of his group. Nagy himself was recommended for the post of chairman of the Hungarian Council of Ministers. The next day the new prime minister announced the introduction of a state of emergency and a curfew. However, within 24 hours he was insisting on their repeal.

All the I. Nagy government's actions from that moment on could have been termed a chain of fatal, unforgivable errors had there not been such open and deliberate treachery behind them. Analyzing the events of late October 1956 day by day and hour by hour, J. Berecz comes to the conclusion that the armed rebellion could have been terminated as early as the first stage of the counterrevolution. Forces loyal to socialism, learning from radio reports about the operation begun by the reaction, were preparing to repulse the insurgents. At plants communists created combat volunteer militias to protect enterprises and plant committees. Party raykoms tried to give an organizational basis to the struggle against the rebellion although they received no definite instructions from above. Hungarian military units took part in repulsing the counterrevolution. Soldiers of the Soviet Army, to which the Hungarian Government turned for help, gave their lives to the cause of defending socialism in Hungary.

A vital turning point in the events could have occurred if the counterrevolution's most powerful support in Budapest--the gangs entrenched in the Kilian and Korvin Lane barracks--had been eliminated. Actions to suppress these dangerous centers of the rebellion were prepared for dawn on 28 October. Hungarian and Soviet subunits took up their attack positions, artillery preparation has begun, but at around 0530 hours the Hungarian units received an order: The operation is canceled because the insurgents are ready to surrender their arms. That day there was a new act of treachery. Threatening to resign, Nagy convinced the leadership to proclaim the counterrevolution a "national democratic movement," to declare a truce, to conclude an agreement on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Budapest, and to begin talks on their complete withdrawal from Hungary. The party leadership hoped to restore calm at the price of these concessions. Subsequent events would show that counterrevolution is not stopped by concessions.

The revisionists who had forced their way to power began the centralized and planned elimination of what remained of the socialist system. Obeying the ultimatum-like demands of the rebels and Western subversive centers, the government first allowed the replacement of the organs of people's power by counterrevolutionary "committees," then the revival of bourgeois parties, and finally announced Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and proclaimed "permanent neutrality."

Brash phrases about "democratic democracy," "free freedom," and the "unification of all Hungarians" were still ringing out and white terror was already reigning on the Budapest streets. On 30 October counterrevolutionary gangs attacked the Budapest party city committee building on Republic Square. City

committee first secretary Imre Mezo and other defenders of the city committee were cruelly murdered. On the streets a genuine manhunt was launched and the rebels' newspaper MAGYAR FUGGETLENSÉGI exulted: "On all the airwaves all the radio stations of the free nations are praising us." A "purge" began at enterprises and institutions. "In the name of freedom and democracy," everyone who did not show sympathy for the saboteurs and criminal elements, formed into "revolutionary committees," was driven out. Armed physical terror was reinforced by a campaign of threats and intimidation. The death list numbered 10,000. On 30-31 October "soldiers' councils" with old, reactionary officers in the majority were set up in People's Army units and subunits. The disintegration of the army was beginning....

Having opened the final floodgates to armed counterrevolution and unconditionally met all its demands, I. Nagy thus condemned himself in the eyes of those who literally the day before brought him to power. The inspirers of the rebellion were no longer striving to "improve socialism." They wanted more than that--they wanted the complete and immediate elimination of the socialist system in Hungary. At a conference in the White House on the morning of 1 November President D. Eisenhower approved a note from CIA chief A. Dulles, which said: "In Hungary now the problem is that the insurgents have no energetic individual or leader.. Imre Nagy has failed, the insurgents are demanding his resignation...." From that moment the West's eyes were turned hopefully on the sinister figure of Cardinal Mindszenty, convicted of antistate activity in the late forties and freed by the insurgents. Speaking on the radio on 3 November, Mindszenty set out a program for the restoration of capitalism.

The events of the first days of November demonstrated that the cause of socialism in Hungary was in danger. International reaction was celebrating a victory which seemed close, extolling the "heroic Hungarian freedom fighters," and increasing its anticommunist and anti-Soviet propaganda. Events in Hungary coincided with the bandit-like aggression launched by the British, French, and Israeli governments against Egypt. The scent of war spread over the planet. However, reaction rejoiced prematurely.

At 0500 hours Budapest time on 4 November the world heard from radio reports about the creation of the Hungarian revolutionary workers and peasants government led by Janos Kadar. The creation of the revolutionary forces' combat center was initiated by communist ministers, who broke with the revisionists who had taken the path of treachery, and true to their oath acted in defense of people's power. In an open letter they justified their decision in these terms: "We were prompted to take this serious step by the realization that within the Imre Nagy government, which had come under pressure from reaction and was powerless, we no longer had any possibility of opposing the counter-revolutionary danger, which is manifesting itself with increasing force and threatening to destroy our People's Republic, workers and peasants power, and our socialist gains."

In the extremely difficult and urgent situation which had been created the workers and peasants government decided to ask the Soviet Union for help.

The USSR, true to its internationalist duty, responded to the request. At dawn on 4 November Soviet units began simultaneous operations from different directions aimed at eliminating the counterrevolutionary gangs and within a few days the operation was complete.

Besides the elimination of the armed counterrevolution the most important task was to unite communists' ranks, recreate the party, and win the confidence of the working masses. On 6 November the MSZMP Provisional Central Committee headed by Janos Kadar issued an appeal which said: "The situation demands the unification of all the party's forces since only that way can we successfully repulse the counterrevolutionary onslaughts aimed at restoring capitalism, only that way will we be able to defend the people's power. Only by uniting can we safeguard for the Hungarian working class, the laboring peasantry, the advanced intelligentsia, and all the Hungarian people the broadest development of democracy, our national independence and sovereignty, and the victory of the socialist system.... To make it clear to everyone that we want an end to the mistakes of the past once and for all, we have decided to change our party's name: We are adopting the title the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party."

By the end of November 1,980 MSZMP primary organizations were already in operation and their number was growing daily. According to figures available on 30 December, around 102,000 people belonged to the party. The restoration of the organs of people's power, the armed forces, and public order protection subunits was being conducted in parallel.... At the beginning of December the party's Provisional Central Committee held a plenum which revealed the main reasons for the events that had occurred.

"The decisions of the December MSZMP Provisional Central Committee plenum accelerated the process of socialist consolidation, provided a clear assessment of the situation, and determined the party's main tasks. They mobilized communists and all patriots who were ready to strengthen socialism in practice. And subsequent events, including the development of consolidation in the first half of 1957, were vivid confirmation of this." Janos Berecz ends his book with those words and stops there. Everything which has happened since then, 3 decades of socialist building, applies not so much to history as to present-day Hungary, of which the Hungarian people are rightly proud. Their achievements are well known. During these 30 years Hungary has become a country of modern industry and science and advanced agriculture and a respected and prestigious member of the world community.

We could also end there but for one document, although not one taken from the archives since it is dated October of this year, is pompously called a proclamation, and is headed "Hungarian Freedom Fighters Day--1986." We quote: "The Hungarian people have written many chapters in the history of the struggle for freedom, but the most glorious page was in 1956. On 23 October 1956 Hungarians, including young people, staged an uprising." It goes on: "Their example is also alive today because we see how courageous people--we also call them freedom fighters--carry out true people's revolutions against communist oppression throughout the world." The above quote was not from

emigre organizations. Not even Radio Free Europe. That interpretation of the events of 30 years ago originated in Washington and came from the pen of the present White House boss or, at least, is sealed with his signature.

Much may be said on this score. But its essence will be extremely brief. So long as there are influential forces in existence which cannot reconcile themselves to the fact that the world does not want to live according to their model or according to their diktat, so long as those forces give rise not only to unjust words but also provocative actions, the lessons of the Hungarian events of fall 1956 cannot be forgotten.

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CSO: 1807/52

EASTERN EUROPE

SOVIET NEWS MEDIA RECALL 1956 HUNGARIAN UPRISING, USSR ROLE

TV Report

LD032240 Moscow Television Service in Russian 1530 GMT 3 Nov 86

[From the "Vremya" newscast; E. Shirokov video report from Budapest]

[Excerpts] [Video shows street scenes] This is Szolnok today. Szolnok was a rallying point for forces opposing the enemies of People's Hungary in the difficult days of November 1956. In recently published books and pamphlets and in radio and television broadcasts describing what happened in Hungary 30 years ago, when counterrevolution attempted to overturn the gains of socialism in Hungary by force, these days, 3 and 4 November, are marked as days when there was a significant turn-around in the campaign against the enemies of the people's order. It was in Szolnok from 3 to 4 November that the Hungarian revolutionary workers' and peasants' government led by Janos Kadar was created.

This is the district council building where the revolutionary workers' and peasants' government was formed. [Video shows building] The words of the appeal resounded from this hall. The new government's appeal was listened to by the people. The time for action has come, it said. Let us defend the workers and peasants' authority and the gains of people's democracy. Let us restore order. Let us establish security and calm in our country. The formation of the Hungarian Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants government and its appeal for help to the Soviet Union as well as the rendering of this internationalist aid received the support of the Hungarian working peoples and of all the progressive forces throughout the world.

The dark days during which revolutionaries and communists were killed, public buildings were destroyed, and the work of factories was paralyzed, and when these acts were cynically called a victory for democracy at the prompting of the west, are a thing of the past and have made way to the future of Hungary --a creative peaceful life which we see today.

PRAVDA Correspondent's Report

PM061209 [Editorial report] Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 4 November 1986 First Edition carries on page 4 an 1,800-word Budapest dispatch by own correspondent V. Gerasimov entitled "With Faith and Conviction: People's Hungary

Today," describing Hungary's present-day economic successes. These, according to "Hungarian economic managers" cited by the writer, "depend on the republic's firm ties with the fraternal socialist countries, and primarily its close cooperation with the Soviet Union." Gerasimov notes that the "new life that has been won is a valuable possession. And the people are guarding it vigilantly."

In a concluding passage he recalls the events of October 1956: "People recalled the tragic fall of 1956 during a wreathlaying at the memorial to the victims of the counterrevolution next to the city committee building on Republic Square, where a large rally was also held. Then documentaries were shown on television and a series of articles appeared in the newspapers which repeatedly turned to the lessons of the class struggle and the need for the further strengthening of people's power and the alliance of workers and peasants. The articles also rebuffed imperialist propaganda's fabrications and slander.

"Elsewhere this fall in Hungary has aroused 'reminiscences' from the defenders of fascism and white terror. The shoddiest goods are being dragged out of the cold war arsenal.

"There have already been more than enough fabrications. On 31 October 1956 the Vienna newspaper DER ABEND wrote: '...When the sun sets it may well be that the Hungarian People's Republic will no longer exist.' Other bourgeois newspapers and radio stations in the West predicted the complete collapse of plans to collectivize the countryside in Hungary, disintegration of the economy, and the failure of the economic reform, discovered a 'gulf' between the party and the people, and tried to demonstrate the application of capitalist methods in Hungary or time and again heaped slander on Hungarian-Soviet relations.

"The imperialist propaganda services' present aggressive attack shows yet again that they are still nurturing the hope that when the sun sets the Hungarian People's Republic and the socialism won by the Hungarian people in revolutionary creation will cease to exist. But that will never happen, says laboring socialist Hungary. The party and the working people's current actions are imbued with determination to increase what has been gained, to reveal the new potential and the advantages of socialist economic principles, to speed up the economic mechanism, and to further enhance social activeness.

"We can also tell our friends with confidence,' Janos Kadar, general secretary of the MSZMP, said at a rally of working people move the Csepel machine building plant, 'that the working class, the cooperatively organized peasantry, the intelligentsia, and the vast majority of the Hungarian people understand and support the MSZMP's policy, whose aim is to preserve and increase the results achieved and the gains of socialism and to build a developed socialist society.'"

/7051

CSO: 1807/55

CHINA/FAR EAST/PACIFIC

CHINESE ECONOMIC STATISTICS CITED, PERFORMANCE APPRAISED

PM071149 Moscow EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA in Russian No 45, Nov 86 (Signed to Press 30 Oct 86) p 20

[TASS correspondent G. Arslanov report specially written for EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA: "PRC: Results of the Year's First 9 Months"]

[Text] The PRC State Statistical Administration has published figures on the Chinese economy's development in the first 9 months of the current year. Zhang Zhongji, spokesman of the PRC State Statistical Administration, declared that this period saw stable development of agriculture, which is the basis of the national economy, and that industrial output rose, exports increased, and the population's living standards were raised.

Compared with the corresponding period last year, the harvest of early and summer grain crops increased by 5.3 million metric tons or 1.4 percent. Production of meat, milk, and other livestock products increased by an average of 4-8 percent.

The total volume of industrial output in the period under review increased by 6.4 percent compared with the first 9 months of 1985. This is 0.6 percent less than the annual plan indicators for the 7th 5-Year Plan. But while the growth in the first quarter was 4.4 percent, it reached 9 percent in the third quarter.

The introduction of the new economic machinery methods had to some extent a positive effect on the range of output produced. At the same time, the number of loss-making enterprises increased under the new conditions, and so far there has been no noticeable improvement in output quality.

During the 9 months the country extracted 633 million metric tons of coal and 96 million metric tons of petroleum, generated 328 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity, and smelted 30 million metric tons of steel. The country's railroads acquired 631 locomotives in this period. But, compared with the corresponding period last year, production of cars and small tractors fell by almost 16 and 12 percent respectively.

The market regulation machinery led to further increases in the prices of foodstuffs, including meat, eggs, seafood, and fresh fruit. Retail prices

increased by an average of 5 percent in 8 months. Nonetheless, the revival of economic activity which has taken place in recent years in cities and in the countryside has resulted in greater prosperity for the population. During the 9 months the wage fund for the country's workers and employees increased by 20.4 percent compared with the corresponding period of 1985. Peasants' prosperity also increased.

Housing construction is being carried out intensively following an almost complete halt during the "cultural revolution" period. About 25 million square meters of housing were constructed in Chinese cities this year.

The PRC's trade with the Soviet Union developed successfully. During the 9 months the export of Chinese goods to the USSR increased by 50.8 percent; purchases of Soviet goods by Chinese foreign trade organizations increased by 57.9 percent.

Despite the generally stable development of the PRC economy, Zhang Zhongji remarked, there are also some destabilizing factors--poor output quality, overstocking, and discrepancies between demand and supply.

/7051

CSO: 1807/54

CHINA/FAR EAST/PACIFIC

BRIEFS

PRC FRIENDSHIP DELEGATION IN KAZAKHSTAN--On 14 October a reception was held at the Kazakh SSR Council of Ministers for a delegation from the Chinese People's Society for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Chinese-Soviet Friendship Society of the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region of the PRC, which was visiting Alma-Ata. In his conversation with the guests, deputy chairman of the Kazakh SSR Council of Ministers M.M. Akhmetov spoke about the contribution of the workers of the republic in the development of the people's economy of the country and in fulfilling the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress and the 16th Congress of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan. The importance of further activization of bilateral mutually beneficial relations was noted. [Text] [Alma-Ata KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 16 Oct 86 p 3]

CSO: 1807/63

MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA/SOUTH ASIA

U.S. 'NEOGLOBALIST' AIMS IN MIDDLE EAST ASSAILED

PM271525 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Oct 86 Morning Edition p 5

[R. Markaryan article under the rubric "Problems and Judgments": "The Near East and U.S. Doctrines"]

[Text] After a "pause" the United States is once again displaying feverish activeness in the Near East. U.S. Vice President G. Bush has twice visited the region, Assistant Secretary of State R. Murphy has made trips to many Near Eastern countries, and other lower-ranking American official representatives have also been to the region.

Diplomatic activeness alternates with militarist activeness: American military maneuvers have been conducted in the region and aggression was committed against Libya.

The question arises: What are the aims of the current U.S. military-political offensive in the Near East and, more broadly, what does Washington want to achieve in this region? In order to understand the question we must, if only briefly, examine certain aspects of the American Administration's foreign policy course and define the place given to the Near East in this policy.

The mid-eighties saw the formulation of "neoglobalism" and "low-intensity conflicts," which expressed in concentrated form the U.S. determination to expand its sphere of influence by any means, but primarily by military means, support pro-American regimes, and destabilize--and, if possible, overthrow--those governments pursuing a policy displeasing to the United States.

Analyzing the doctrine of "neoglobalism" (this, incidentally, also applies to previous American doctrines) I would like to draw attention to two points. First, no new doctrine signifies a total rejection of the "positive"--from the viewpoint of its authors--elements present in previous doctrines. For example, one of the main features of Reagan's "neoglobalism" is the thesis borrowed from the "Carter doctrine" regarding American "vital interests."

Second, the creators of these doctrines strive to give each one a "theoretical" base. This has again happened now, when the "vacuum" theory put forward as far back as the fifties by the then U.S. Secretary of State J.F. Dulles has

again surfaced. The essence of this theory is as follows: If an independent country pursues an anti-American course, this forms a "vacuum" of influence which, in the conditions of confrontation with the USSR, must be filled by the United States by any means--either by the violent overthrow of that country's legitimate government or by altering its policy by bringing American military, political, and economic pressure to bear.

The result of the adoption of this new doctrine is an unprecedented buildup of the American military presence in various regions of the world, increasing U.S. aid for the Afghan dushmans and Nicaraguan "contras," the occupation of Grenada, participation in provocations against Angola and other African "front-line" states--the list of actions characterizing the United States' present "neoglobalist" policy could be continued.

How does the Near East fit into this doctrine? It must be said that postwar American administrations have devoted particular attention to this strategically important region of the world, which is exceptionally rich in oil; the current administration, however, has perhaps surpassed all its predecessors in its attempts to subordinate its Near East policy as much as possible to the global tasks of confrontation with the USSR.

At first efforts in this respect were oriented toward creating a so-called "strategic consensus," which implied uniting Israel and "moderate" Arab regimes in a Washington-sponsored alliance for struggle against the mythical "Soviet threat" to the region. Since the collapse of this enterprise, the United States has concentrated on strengthening in every possible way its relations with Israel, bringing them up to the level of "strategic cooperation." The fact that Washington's main aim here is to resolve its global tasks is evidenced by the anti-Soviet nature of this American-Israeli alliance and Israel's involvement in plans to realize the "star wars" program,

Another aspect of this "strategic cooperation" is the attempt to preserve Israel's military superiority in the region and guarantee Tel Aviv favorable conditions for continuing its aggressive policy, and also the refusal to settle the Near East conflict on a fair basis, which implies returning to the Arabs the territories occupied in 1967 and granting to the Arab people of Palestine the right to self-determination and the formation of their own independent state. This course by the partners in the anti-Arab strategic collusion is becoming, as political observers note, even more rigid with the handover of the Israeli prime ministership to Y. Shamir, the leader of the right-wing extremist "Likud" bloc, who, when taking up the post of premier on Monday, spoke in favor of colonizing all the seized Arab lands and expediting the construction of Israeli settlements on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip.

Every means--military, political, and economic--is being used to put these plans into practice. In the military sphere everything is being done to maintain Israel's qualitative superiority in arms (there is even talk of granting Tel Aviv the special status enjoyed only by U.S. NATO allies, which will make it possible to remove the last, not very great, barriers to

supplying the country with the most up-to-date types of weapons). In the political and economic spheres measures are being taken which are aimed at imposing capitulationist settlement scenarios on the Arabs and maintaining and intensifying the disunity of the Arab world.

Great efforts have been made to force Jordan to enter into separate talks with Israel, preserve contradictions within the PLO's ranks, and make it difficult for Egypt to draw closer to other Arab states on the basis of eroding the Camp David agreements.

Attempts are also being made to make the Iran-Iraq war last as long as possible. Tel Aviv's interest in the continuation of this war is obvious: It has weakened and continues to weaken the Arabs' potential to oppose Israeli expansionism. Naturally, this also suits the United States, which, however, derives other advantages for itself from the continuing conflict: The war has created a very convenient pretext for building up the American military presence in the Persian Gulf region. What is more, the Iran-Iraq war has revived Washington's hopes of restoring its lost positions in the warring states and blunting the anti-imperialist thrust of their policies.

Violent measures against those states which steadfastly oppose American-Israeli diktat and pressure are also not ruled out. This is why the strike was made against Libya, a repeat of which is threatened.

The negative impact of American-Israeli policy on the situation in the Near East would undoubtedly be less if the Arab world could settle its differences, restore its unity, and work out a joint position.

Unfortunately, this is not the case at present. What is more, recent events in the Near East--in particular, the meetings between S. Peres, the former Israeli premier, and Moroccan King Hassan II and Egyptian President H. Mubarak--have intensified differences in the Arab world still further. Many states in the region, as well as political parties and public organizations, have sharply criticized the results of these meetings as not being conducive to a just, comprehensive settlement of the situation in the Near East.

It is quite obvious that a solution to the Near East problem can be found only through the collective efforts of all interested parties and by taking their legitimate interests into account. It is precisely this that the Soviet Union has been urging for many years; its proposals of 29 July 1984 set out specific ways and the mechanism of achieving just peace in the Near East.

The way to establish just, lasting peace in the region lies in convening a UN-sponsored international conference on the Near East with the participation of all interested parties and permanent members of the UN Security Council. The urgent need for a political settlement to the Near East conflict is understood by an increasing number of states in the world.

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CSO: 1807/51

MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA/SOUTH ASIA

CENTRAL ASIAN JOURNAL ON GULF WAR, PROBLEMS FOR IRAN, IRAQ

Tashkent ZVEZDA VOSTOKA in Russian No 7, 1986 pp 133-140

[Article by Aleksandr Kudinov: "The Long-Drawn Out War"]

[Text] A folk fantasy placed the biblical Garden of Eden between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Its boundaries extended over the present-day territory of Iraq and Iran--the areas where the oldest civilizations on earth were born.

Today there is a war going on here. The rumble of tanks is unceasing, airplanes scream by, missiles and shells tear through the air...Truly, where at one time there was paradise, today it is hell. The war which began in 1980 between Iraq and Iran has grown into a long-drawn out armed conflict. The combat operations, sometimes dying down for a short time and then erupting with new force, have been practically unceasing for almost 6 years now, taking on an ever more bloody and large-scale character and threatening the entire region with the fires of war.

What is the cause of this controversy? It is not so easy to answer this question unequivocally. The peoples of Iran and Iraq have much in common in their history and culture, and have much to unite them. However, the capitalist countries who have ruled here for a long time sowed many seeds of dissention when they left, hoping to use their possible upstarts to regain their control over this region of the world which is so important in a strategic and economic respect.

In the 70's, the imperialist powers, striving to ensure their interests in the subregion, placed their stakes primarily on Israel and the Shah's Iran. It was specifically these countries who were given the role of marionettes with gendarme functions in the struggle against the Arab national-liberation movement. The West, and primarily the USA, energetically used these two states for disuniting the Arabs, striving not to allow unity in the actions of the latter. The newspaper AL-KABAS (Kuwait) wrote: "The USA is constantly sowing hatred among the Arabs, not allowing them to implement a coordinated policy answering their national interests. With this goal in mind, Washington always rendered support to the enemies of the Arab nation and to all the forces who strived to split its ranks. And on the contrary, any Arab leader who wanted to unite the efforts of the Arabs was immediately placed on the "blacklist" of fervent enemies of America". But marionettes do not always dance to someone else's tune. They have ambitions of their own.

At the decree of the Persian King Darius, who ruled long before the beginning of our era, the following inscription was written: "By the will of Ormuzd¹, the countries which I have received are placed under my rule...They bring me tribute. What I tell them, they will do." The former greatness of his predecessors has always aroused the all too fiery imagination of the Shah of Iran. He repeatedly announced his pretensions on Bahrain, and in 1957 he even proclaimed it to be his fourteenth ostan (rayon) and assigned to it one deputies' seat in the medjlis. However, Bahrain was proclaimed an independent state, and the Shah was forced to withdraw his pretensions.

But now the republican Baasist regime becomes established in Iraq. Washington, London and Paris see in it a serious threat to their "vital interests" and resort to the old tactics: "Divide and conquer". The imperialist politicians begin to push Tehran to speak out against Baghdad. The occasion for this presented itself when in March of 1974 there arose military actions in the north of Iraq between the Kurds and the Iraqi army. Iran morally and materially supported the Kurd rebels. Iraq immediately responded by expressing its sympathies to those who speak out in favor of independence of the so-called Arabistan (Khuzistan), one of the oil-bearing regions of Iran with a sizeable Arab population. After 1979, Iran stepped up its propaganda of ideas of the Islamic revolution. The appeals to the Iraqi Shiites to overthrow the "godless leadership" there became more frequent. The Iran-Iraq conflict became tied into an ever tighter knot. Intertwined in it were ethnic and religious problems, as well as territorial pretensions.

The "religious question" was inherited from history. In ancient times, the Iranian province Khuzistan was called Suziana. This eastern part of the Tigris and Euphrates valley often passed from one conqueror to another. Over a period of many centuries it served as a unique melting pot, where peoples of various races and cultures were blended together. In the 7th century of our era, the two-river valley, or Mesopotamia, was part of the mighty empire of the Persians--the Sasanids. Like their predecessors the Akhemenids, they practiced Zoroastrism and were proud of belonging to the Aryan race. In the period between 637 and 642, the tribes of Arabs living on the Arab Peninsula descended in an avalanche on Mesopotamia and under the banner of Islam they crushed the Persian armies. Persia was forced to accept Islam and became a part of the Arab khalifate. Yet it was never fully Arabized.

After the death of Mohammed (the founder of the Islam religion and the centralized Arab state, who died in 632), tribal discord, a fierce struggle for the sceptre (its precious stones and carving represented indisputable authority), as well as divergences on principle questions of religious teaching caused a schism in the Muslim world. Numerous sects and "heretic currents" arose within it. The initial disagreements regarding the competence of the heirs to the "prophet" Mohammed subsequently resulted in Islam being split into two main currents--the orthodox Sunnites (proponents of the sunna--the code of legends about the "prophet" and the sayings ascribed to him), and the insurgent Shiites (which means the "proponents", in this case of the fourth khalif Ali). While the Sunnites affirmed that the first four elected khalifs (Abu-Bekr, Omar, Osman and Ali) were rightful heirs of Mohammed, the Shiites recognized only Ali as being the first rightful khalif and imam (in Arabic, "standing at the head, leader") of Islam. Shiism attracted to its side groups who expressed dissatisfaction with their economic and social position and who spoke out against the

order established by the Sunnite khalifs, and at the same time against the supremacy of the nomadic tribes of the Arab Peninsula in Iran and Mesopotamia. In the process of its formation, Shiism took on ideas and beliefs which were not associated with Mohammedism. These ideas dated back to early Judaism, Christianity, and specifically to the traditions of Zoroastrism which reigned in Persia.

Having freed itself from the rule of the khalifs, Iran turned into the main stronghold of Shiite doctrine. The Iranian cities of Qom and Mashhad came to be considered "holy" and turned into places of pilgrimage. Even now Shiism continues to remain the leading religion of Iran. However, we will note that in Iraq, according to the data of the foreign press, 60 percent of the population, primarily of the southern and eastern provinces bordering on Khuzistan, is comprised of Shiites. They also have their "holy" cities--Karbala and Najaf (the grave of Ali is located in Najaf, and the graves of his sons Hassan and Hussein are located in Karbala. The Shiites worship all three as the main founders of Islam after Mohammed).

However, religious differences between the neighboring states are nevertheless not the main ones. They are notably forced into the background as compared with the much more specific disagreements on the question of the boundary along the Shatt al Arab River, which is a vitally important waterway for both countries, connecting them with the Persian Gulf. This river is formed by the merging of the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates and is their common broad mouth. It is 200 kilometers long, of which 80 kilometers coincide with the state border. The Iranian ports of Abadan and Khorramshahr, as well as the large Iraqi port city of Basra are located on this river.

Long-term disagreements over the Shatt al Arab have repeatedly led to aggravation of relations and have posed the threat of military conflict. But in 1847 the first agreement was reached between Persia and the Ottoman Empire. As it turned out, this agreement was more beneficial to the Iranian side. The smoldering coals of conflict could not be doused. In 1913-1914 the area of dissent became in fact subordinate to England, although nominally it remained within the make-up of the Ottoman Empire. At that time, the Shatt al Arab River was proposed as a boundary between the neighboring states. Years passed, the negotiations dragged on, and no clear line or demarcation really existed. From both sides they gazed upon the wide mirror of water and considered it theirs. And this was fraught with the potential danger of the emergence of war. Finally in 1937 during the British mandate over Iraq, the boundary was defined. It passed along the bank of the river on the Iranian side. The bonfire of dissatisfaction at this decision now began to flare up brightly on the territory of Iran. In 1975 in Algiers an agreement was reached between the debating parties regarding establishing the boundary along the thalweg, along the center of the Shatt al Arab. Four years later, in October of 1979, Iraq rejected the agreement and proclaimed its rights to the entire river.

However, this was not the only subject of disagreement. The debate goes on also about other small sections of the border zone with an overall area of 372 square kilometers. Demands are often heard from Baghdad, as well as the capitals of other Arab states, regarding the granting of autonomy to Arab Khuzistan. At one

time this province was known under the name of Arabistan. 2.5 of its 3.5 million residents are Arabs. During the British mandate, the high ruler of this region, Sheik Khazal, had a special agreement with England, promising to protect the oil facilities in exchange for an autonomous position in relation to the Iranian government, to which he was nominally subordinate.

Washington's attitude to all the troubles complicating the age-old contradictions in the region was rather curious. "When the USA and Iran," wrote the NEW YORK TIMES, "were interested in annoying the Iraqis, we encouraged the Kurds to rebel and supplied them with weapons. However, when Iran and Iraq came to terms with each other, the United States and Iran abandoned their Kurdish clients to the whim of fate." The White House, inciting Arab-Persian rivalry, tried to use the fear which the subregion's conservative regimes had in regard to the strengthening of their all too radical neighbors. At the same time, the US, ruling circles, speculating on the Arab-Persian differences, strived to push the Arab countries, and primarily Iraq, to direct actions against Iran. The American "yellow press" began to spread the thesis about the Shiite danger for the Arabs of the Persian Gulf, and then immediately reported on the impending fall of the regime in Tehran and on the possibility of the fall of Iran. In June of 1980, Washington spokesman Z. Brezhinski made it clear that the USA would not oppose Iraqi pretensions to the Shatt al Arab and the possible creation of the Republic of Arabistan. The imperialist secret services, planting misinformation, sowing mistrust, suspicion and hatred, have facilitated in the most direct manner the rekindling of the age-old territorial dispute between Iraq and Iran which at one time had died down.

In connection with this, the French FIGARO noted that: "All of history is reduced to the exceptionally skillful instigation for the purpose of involving S. Hussein and Iraq into a war against Iran." In the words of the newspaper, a victory by Iraq would lead to the destabilization of Iran, the fall of the Islamic regime, and the ascent to power of a pro-western government. In the case of the defeat of Baghdad, however, which was also foreseen as a possibility, the USA could step in in the role of "protector", demanding a certain payment for its help.

The passions became especially heated on the eve of the war. The Americans, via Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, sent "information" to Iraq stating that as soon as Iraqi forces appeared at the borders of Iran there would be a revolt of the entire Arab population of Khuzistan, Iran would suffer a complete defeat, and everything left of the Iranian army would soon fall apart. American imperialism strived to use each of the opposing sides to deal a blow to Arab unity and to restore its former supremacy in Iran. The Pentagon sent over 60 military vessels toward the Strait of Hormuz. Washington tried ever more actively to create new bases in this region.

On 4 September 1980, Iranian artillery shelled several populated border points in Iraq. Responding to the challenge, on 9-16 September Iraqi forces crossed the Iranian border and occupied a base for attack in the central part of the Iranian border zone which, according to the announcements of Baghdad "should have gone to Iraq on the basis of the Algiers agreement of 1975". On 22 September Iraq began large-scale military operations in the southern and central part of the border for the purpose of "waging a battle against the aggressor on his own land."

In the past years, the war has taken on a varying character--from major battles to positional exchange of fire. It was accompanied by flare-ups of fierce clashes and prolonged lulls in the battle, "general assaults" on both sides and the so-called "tanker war". Stubborn battles were at first waged on Iranian territory. Soon, however, the initiative passed to the Iranian forces, who had restored their positions and had come to the line of the state border. Since the middle of 1982, the firestorm passed along the boundary line over a front extending for over 1,000 kilometers. Later its flames spread to the northern part of the Persian Gulf, where the targets for attack were the oil installations and seagoing vessels. To this day, huge tongues of flame trail high into the sky. These are the burning tankers bringing oil out of Iran and certain other countries of this region, set aflame by missiles. In 1984, the "tanker war" grew into the war of "cities," since the warring sides broke their agreement reached on 12 June 1984 with the aid of the UN Secretary General about not attacking civilian objectives, and began massive bombing, missile and artillery strikes on populated areas. Among these, on Iranian territory were Tehran, Abadan, Ahwaz, Esfahan, Dezful, Ilam, Gilyane-Gharb, Dehloran, Marivan, Kerman, Islamabad-Gerbu, Khorramshahr; on Iraqi territory were Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk, Mandali, Khanagin, Badrah, Zurbatiya, Aghra, Koi-Sandjan, Saidiya, Diwaniyah, Ali al Gharbi, Amarah, Khurmala, Varmahraza, Dosheyha,, and Naft-Khana. As a result there was extensive destruction of industrial enterprises and residential blocks, numerous casualties among the civilian population, and panic and terror from the regularly announced air raids.

In March of 1985, the situation became even more acute when Iranian forces comprised of eight divisions advanced into the region "east of the Tigris River", or more precisely--to the north of the city of Basra, at the Khoveyze swamps. Their goal was to take the strategic highway connecting this second largest Iraqi city with Baghdad, and thereby to cut off the south of the country from the rest of Iraq. Tehran was counting on the fact that "the next general offensive" would be supported by the Iraqi Shiites, especially in the city of Basra, where they comprised 99 percent of its million population. After all, theoretically they would seem to be the natural allies of the "Islamic revolution" in Iran. Along some portions of the front the Iranians were able to cross the Tigris and move 10-15 kilometers into the depth of Iraqi territory. However, not having any air support and experiencing serious difficulties in bringing their tanks and heavy artillery into combat on the boggy terrain, the attacking units soon broke down and began to retreat, bearing heavy casualties. Without the proper fire support, they could not break through the strong defenses which had been set ahead of time. In order to complete the rout, the Iraqis used their significant supremacy in aviation. According to the reports of western information agencies, they completed 600-700 airplane flights a day. Here we must note that Iranian military aviation is clearly inferior to the Iraqi both in the number of airplanes, and in their combat capabilities. Iran has around 110-120 combat planes, most of them obsolete. Iraq, however, has about 700 planes and helicopters.

The Iranians also received no support from the Muslim Shiites. The uprising never occurred. Tehran was angry. They began to condemn their "brothers of the same faith" in the newspapers, on television and radio. Basra and even the "holy" cities of Najaf and Karbala became "lawful" targets for shelling with all types of weapons.

The combat continued for 10 days. It was evaluated as being the most fierce and bloody from September of 1980. The list of casualties was augmented by several tens of thousands of dead and wounded on both sides. The flow of refugees turned into a real avalanche. After all, tens of thousands of people were trying to get out of the pre-front zone. Today, in order to leave Basra one must pay 550 dinars, or 1500 pounds sterling (as of 27 February 1986 100 British pounds sterling were equal to 107.14 rubles). Nevertheless, the demand for taxis, as well as buses, personal automobiles, bicycles and even camels remains high. The refugees stream into neighboring Kuwait which seems safe to them, although the authorities of this emirate have declared that they are unable to accept everyone. The road to the north has been cut off for the victims of the shelling, since the enemy is making continuous efforts to cover the highway connecting Basra with the capital--Baghdad. We should note here that 60 percent of Iraqi imports were transported over this road from Basra. Now the main highway is within reach of Iranian artillery fire. The flame of military fire in the region of the Khoveyze marshes has almost died down now, but the alarming tensions still do not subside.

In late May-early June of 1985 there was a new aggravation of military actions. The reason for this, according to the foreign press, was the assassination attempt on the Kuwaiti emir on 25 May of last year. Baghdad placed the responsibility for the terrorist act on pro-Iranian elements. However, there was no break in the course of the combat. It seemed already that both sides had spent their militant ardor and were ready to sit down at the negotiating table to try to find a political solution to the problem.

But it was not to be so. The fragile silence, episodically disrupted by artillery and aviation duels, was broken on 9 February of this year by a new offensive operation of the Iranian forces on the Fao Peninsula (south Iraq). The television reports from the Persian Gulf region again showed dive-bombing airplanes, fiery shell explosions, and soldiers running along precarious pontoon bridges.

The general staff of the Iraqi armed forces reported that the bridgehead on the Fao Peninsula had been occupied by around 10 Iranian divisions. As foreign observers stressed, the goal of the Iranian offensive was to cut off Iraq from the Persian Gulf, and to reach the borders of Kuwait. Consequently, the threat arises of an even greater expansion of the geographical outlines of the conflict. Such a dangerous escalation of events not only increases the list of lives lost, but even more greatly heats up the situation in the region and gives the Pentagon a new reason for keeping large military naval and air forces nearby.

Tehran announced that the Iranians were able to occupy the Iraqi oil port of Fao (not operational since 1980), covering the highway leading to Basra. The IRNA [not further expanded] maintained that Iranian forces control 850 square kilometers of Iraqi territory. The reports coming from Baghdad refuted this information and said that the Iraqis are holding Fao and dealing counterattacks to the enemy forces along the entire front, and are continuing combat operations to eliminate the bridgehead taken by the enemy in the southern part of the country. Iran has lost its combat initiative and is waging a defensive battle. The truth, of course, will be determined, but much later. There is an ancient law in war: do not support the enemy's information. The battles for a populated area sometimes last for weeks and months. Everything can change.

The opposing sides have begun to concentrate their efforts along the entire margin of combat actions. It was announced in the Iraqi capital that "military air operations will extend to the entire territory of Iran" if Tehran does not agree to a peaceful regulation of the conflict. At the same time, no attempt is made to hide the fact that the increasingly frequent shelling of the enemy's cities and settlements are caused by the desire to motivate Tehran "at any cost" to stop the war as such, and to force it to accept the idea of peaceful negotiations. In the words of President S. Hussein, Iraq wants "to live freely on its own land within international boundaries, and for Iran to live freely on its land in its own boundaries, and in accordance with its choice...and for Iran and Iraq to play a positive role in the cause of ensuring peace and stability in the region". The chief of state confirmed Iraq's desire to regulate the controversy by peaceful means on the basis of principles of respect for sovereignty, honor, and the legal rights of both countries.

Stating the position of his leadership on the aforementioned questions, Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs T. Aziz, in his letter to the chairman of the U N Security Council, listed the following measures which must be taken immediately: cease fire and all military operations; withdrawal of forces from the internationally recognized boundary; establishing direct contacts with both sides by the U N Secretary General and Security Council to aid in implementing the above-mentioned measures; entry of the party into negotiations for the purposes of achieving all-encompassing and fair regulation.

In the case of taking such a comprehensive approach to the conflict, the Iraqi side would not raise any objections against examining all the other proposals, specifically those "concerning refraining from attacking centers with large concentrations of civilian population and general exchange of war prisoners." The central Baghdad newspaper AS SAURA considered it appropriate to clarify: Iraq "will not make any partial decisions...Let there be either all-encompassing, complete and just regulation, or war on all fronts."

Baghdad's point of view is known to Tehran. However, the reaction to it seems more like the lunge of a musketeer, intent on running through his opponent with a sword. Iran's official representative spoke out with the announcement, presenting the thought that they are trying to force a peace upon his country "which is worse than war," because it "destroys the glory of the Islamic revolution." Tehran has spoken out with a formula for a "step-by-step cessation of military operations". That is, it insists on first reaching a mutual agreement about not attacking cities and economic objects, and about rejecting the air attacks on vessels and oil installations. At the same time, Iran does not tie partial agreements in with steps leading to a cessation of the war. On the contrary, it presents its former claims to Iraq, the most important of which is "to punish the one who is guilty of aggression." The Iranian authorities unequivocally believe that preparations for new offensive operations must continue. These are not merely words. Widespread mobilization measures are being implemented in the country: young people and volunteers are regularly being drafted into the army and the corps by the "guard of the Islamic revolution", military-technical supplies and weapons stockpiles are being replenished. There is an on-going intensive propaganda treatment of the population for the purpose of preparing the Iranians for new casualties, and for continuing the war "to a victorious end." What is the meaning of this slogan? Iran's permanent representative to the U.S., S. Radzhai-Khorasani didactically explains: "We consider

our goal to be the overthrow of the current regime in Baghdad and have no intentions of abandoning it." This is said, we repeat, while the war is completing its sixth year of stalemate. Iran is gathering an army which, as they affirm, will consist of 700,000 "volunteers" who are ready to drown the Iraqi defense in their blood. The Iranian mullahs have repeatedly threatened to cut off the Strait of Hormuz leading to the Persian Gulf, through which one-fifth of the oil imported by the countries of Western Europe and Japan is still transported. Preparing for this action, the Islamic government in Tehran ratified a plan for capturing the tiny atoll of Beit al Ghanam at the entrance to the strait. The above-mentioned atoll belongs to Oman and rules the waterways through which up to 50 super tankers pass every day.

In a word, the bloodshed continues. Meanwhile, each side accuses the other of playing into the hands of imperialism.

This major local conflict, according to the data of the foreign press, has resulted in over a million casualties--killed and wounded. The figure, evidently, is not exaggerated. Thus, back in late 1985 Iranian parliament Deputy Khoseyni announced that 300,000 Iranians have been killed, maimed, or are missing. The huge human losses are draining the life blood from both peoples. The material losses are just as great. The military expenditures of both states taken together have exceeded 100 billion dollars, comprising one-third of the oil profits which they obtained in the last decade. The economy of the conflicting sides suffers losses of about a billion dollars every month. Since the beginning of the war, the losses have exceeded many tens of billions of dollars. Oil extraction has suffered seriously. In Iraq, for example, it dropped from 168 million tons in 1979 to 40 million tons in 1985. The country is forced to curtail its plans for development.

Iran has also suffered setbacks. Due to the shortage of resources, its government, in the words of the journal MIDDLE EAST, has assigned parts of the front to various provinces, which answer for providing the army with food products, clothing and footwear.

As compared with the pre-war period, the prices on the domestic markets of Iraq and Iran on all types of food products and consumer goods have increased by 3-4 times or more. The increased scope of military operations has a common denominator for them--mutual and comprehensive exhaustion. According to the evaluations of the above-mentioned journal, many years will be needed for the warring countries to restore their destroyed economies.

Naturally, the question arises: who wins from this conflict? Of course, it is neither Iraq nor Iran, who bear such human losses and material expenditures which are felt in every family. This war is called fraternalicidal. And in reality, two neighboring states occupying similar positions on numerous foreign policy questions and called upon to solve essentially identical problems of national development, have joined in a death grip to which no end is yet in sight.

The conflict has led to a schism between the Arab countries, which have taken different positions. Instead of affirming its independence in the post-Shah period, Iran is spending its resources on a struggle with its neighbor. The struggle weakens and puts off the possibility of a just Near Eastern regulation and solution of the Palestinian problem on a fair basis. Therefore, if we approach the war from the standpoint of the national interests of the countries in the region and the provision of peace and securities for their peoples, we see that it is senseless and has no logic. Moreover, there is not one single

controversial problem between the warring sides which is not subject to solution by peaceful means at the negotiating table. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries have spoken out in favor of cessation of this conflict from its very beginning. The USSR favors resolving the controversial questions between Iraq and Iran at the negotiating table. In our opinion, those who call for continuing the war "to a victorious end" in spite of their own interests and all logic are acting unwisely.

However, for the USA and Israel, the Iran-Iraq war has a very definite sense. The representative of one American company cynically blurted out their secret insidious plot. "The threat of war," he admitted, "consists of the fact that it might end." In the circles accustomed to getting rich on the blood of the people, "they dream," notes the French newspaper LE MONDE, "that this situation will last as long as possible." The USA and Israel hope that this conflict will create a convenient situation for the start of a new attack against the progressive regimes, the national-liberation movements, and the freedom, independence and sovereignty of countries in this region of the world. The newspaper of the communists in the United States of America, DAILY WORLD, notes that "the Reagan administration is acting in such a way as to weaken both warring sides. Its purpose is to lay the groundwork for new imperialist maneuvers for winning supremacy and control over the Persian Gulf." The Arab press, in turn, stresses that the Pentagon is preparing plans for a step-by-step incursion into the countries in the Persian Gulf zone under the guise of "protecting the oil interests of America and its NATO allies." The long-drawn out war facilitates this to a large degree. In the opinion of Washington, it also serves as a fully acceptable justification for stepping up the military presence of the USA in the Near East and in the Indian Ocean basin.

At present the Pentagon has 25 military bases in the area of the Indian Ocean and in the Persian Gulf zone. These are located on the island of Diego-Garcia, in Oman, Saudi Arabia, in Bahrain, etc. There are 140,000 American military personnel stationed here. The White House is reviewing the question of expanding the American military-naval grouping in the Persian Gulf region. Also being studied is the feasibility of forming a united operative grouping of the Marine Corps and the U.S. Navy for use in the case of "emergency circumstances." One other trait is notable: the U.S. spends 48 percent of its military expenditures on strengthening its positions near the area of conflict outside the national boundaries. The rapid deployment forces intended for military operations in the entire Near East, and specifically in the gulf zone, serve the same purpose. Washington also does not exclude the probability of placing medium range missiles and even neutron weapons there.

The U.S. administration is trying to force its military guardianship on the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, and to involve some of them into prepared armed intervention. According to the report of the NEW YORK TIMES, President Reagan sent King Saud of Saudi Arabia a message in which he affirmed that the USA "is fully willing to give aid to the countries in the region if they ask for it." Here we must add that these "offers" by Washington, which strive to obtain permission from the Arab countries for "repelling the foreign threat" were not accepted by the latter. They believe that the USA and some of its allies are conducting a hypocritical policy: expounding on the threat to the region, they fan the Iran-Iraq conflict and prepare the ground for their own military intervention in the Persian Gulf region.

Oman decided to rely on its own forces to protect Beit al Ghanal atoll. For this purpose it allocated six patrol boats and a 16,000 man army. Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Sudan promised troop support if necessary. Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates began hiring "professional soldiers" in England, Canada and Australia in order to train their armies and form new subdivisions. The Arabs believe that the USA has no right to intervene in the conflict under the guise of "protecting oil shipments" from the region, since its dependence on oil from the Persian Gulf comprises only 9 percent of its overall imports. The progressive community points out that revolutions bearing an anti-imperialist character have taken place in Iran and Iraq. It would be an irony of fate if they opened the way for American intervention. The real motive of action by the USA is not to give aid to the Persian Gulf countries, but rather to gain a foothold in this strategically important region, which they have been striving to do for many decades.

The conflict between Iraq and Iran has become the catalyst for the arms race in the region. It is the bridge which the Pentagon lays in order to substantiate itself in this region by any means possible. However, the military shipments by the USA are calculated in such a way so as not to facilitate a reduction in the prevalent offensive potential of Israel. The countries comprising the Council for the Cooperation of Arab States in the Persian Gulf (CCASPG)--Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman--are becoming involved in the arms race. Thus, the expenditures for the development of the single defense system of the CCASPG in 1984-1986 are valued at 6 million dollars. The president of the USA has sanctioned shipments of 400 "Stinger" anti-aircraft missiles to Saudi Arabia. The "KS-10" fuel tanker plane and service personnel for it have also been sent there, as well as new shipments of ammunition, spare parts and military equipment for the purpose of increasing the combat readiness of Saudi Arabia's air force.

It may seem paradoxical, yet it remains a fact that the American administration continues to supply military equipment also to Iran. In 1984 it sold [Iran] equipment and dual purpose implements in the sum of 30 million dollars. These are applied for civilian as well as military purposes, and used in the conflict.

As concerns the interest of Israel in further dragging out the conflict between Iraq and Iran, this desire is not even concealed.

A number of transnational companies also speak out both secretly and openly in favor of continuing the conflict. These are oil exporters who see in the cessation of the war a possibility of a large influx of oil onto the world market from these oil producing countries, and a serious reduction in their own profits.

Many countries and international organizations, concerned with the spreading of the military conflict, are making serious efforts at its regulation. The Soviet Union has made an appeal to both sides to put an end to the war. Representatives from the UN, the "Islamic Conference" organization, and the movement of nonaligned countries have visited the capitals of both states during these years. The League of Arab Nations has spoken out in favor of peace between Iraq and Iran.

Today everyone who holds peace dear and who is concerned with the tragic events taking place in this region speaks out with appeals to stop the fighting and put an end to the tragic bloodshed. The USSR is firmly convinced that the continuation of the conflict is beneficial only to those who warm their hands through the suffering and sacrifice of peoples. The facts show: the more tense the situation becomes in the relations between Iran and Iraq, the easier it is for the forces of imperialism to find excuses for their intervention, in order to deepen the schism between the Arab countries and facilitate the spread of their expansion in the entire Near East region.

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MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA/SOUTH ASIA

PDRY SAID SUCCESSFUL IN OVERCOMING EFFECTS OF 'TRAGIC EVENTS'

PM280951 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Oct 86 Morning Edition p 5

[M. Kozhevnikov article: "Making Headway"]

[Text] Recent reports from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen [PDRY] speak of a noticeable revitalization of political, economic, and social life. Labor activity and the strengthened authority of the party and state leadership among the people's masses--these are the main features of everyday life in Democratic Yemen.

It is now possible to say with confidence that the wounds inflicted on the country as a result of the tragic events of January this year, when bloody clashes took place in Aden, are gradually healing. Industrial and agricultural production rates are picking up and water and electricity supplies and medical services for the population have been restored.

Work is in full swing to rebuild the national economic installations that were damaged. At the same time efforts are under way to identify reserves for expanding the capacity of existing enterprises. Thus, for instance, new production cycles are being mastered at the Aden oil refinery and the reconstruction of the oil tanker berthing facilities at Aden port--the biggest in the south of the Arabian peninsula--is to begin in the near future.

A thermal power station, a new fishing port, and a desalinization plant are being built in the PDRY capital and power lines to rural areas are being erected.

At recent Yemen Socialist Party [YSP] Central Committee plenums strengthening the party's organizational unity, improving internal party democracy, and enhancing the effectiveness of all party organizations were defined as key tasks. The YSP has declared a struggle against such negative phenomena as corruption, bribe-taking, protectionism, and bureaucracy.

The party is paying the closest attention to questions of restoring the combat readiness of the republic's armed forces, strengthening the country's defense capability, and ensuring its security. The party's program documents emphasize the need for the strict observance of constitutional legality also

in respect of people who took part in the January events on the side of A.N. Muhammad. An important political measure is the implementation of the decree on a general amnesty in the interests of national unity.

Declaring a struggle against the vestiges of the past and against various kinds of negative phenomena, the YSP lays stress in its activities on further democratizing society and making the exercise of power truly a people's concern.

This work is beginning to bear fruit. The congresses of the peasants' union and the women's and youth organizations which have taken place during the last six months have demonstrated the working people's determination to defend the gains of the revolution and their desire to actively participate in building the new society. The recent session of the PDRY Supreme People's Council which discussed vital problems of economic and social development and outlined ways of resolving them occupied an important place in the life of the republic.

Overcoming difficulties and rectifying the mistakes of the past, the PDRY working people are pursuing a course of socioeconomic transformations under the leadership of the YSP. This course has always had and continues to have the support of the Soviet Union. Soviet people express their solidarity with the people of the friendly country, which acts in the international arena in favor of eliminating the threat of a nuclear catastrophe and ensuring a just and lasting peace in the Near East.

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MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA/SOUTH ASIA

USSR PUBLICATION VIEWS SITUATION IN OMAN

PM301719 Moscow NEW TIMES in English No 42, 27 Oct 86 pp 14-15

[Article by M. Petrov: "Oman: The Rim of the Middle East"]

[Excerpt] The British presence is still strong in Oman, with British companies controlling most of the development projects and British advisers and experts having a great deal of influence in the government, the police and the army. All the fighting arms of Oman and the Sultan's guards brigades have British officers. Moreover, the national navy and air force are commanded by the British.

Oman also has close links with the U.S. An agreement was signed in June 1980, before the outbreak of the Gulf War, under which the United States was granted "access" to military facilities at As Sib, Thamarit, Khasab (on the Musandam Peninsula) and on Masirah Island "in periods of international crisis." In practice American planes are based on Oman airfields virtually on a regular basis and American warships frequently call at the country's ports. The Americans also store military equipment in the country. Quite a few military exercises with the participation of American troops have been staged in Oman. In the past three years the U.S. has made about \$300 million available for the modernization of the military bases and in late 1985 agreement was reached on the use of military technology kept at bases in Oman by the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force. The Pentagon attaches special importance to the air force base on Masirah, which is viewed as a key element of the chain of the U.S. military bases in the Indian Ocean. According to a recent programme on the U.S. NBC TV, the bases in Oman are considered a stronghold for use in a possible confrontation with the USSR in the Persian Gulf, and also as a staging area against Iran. Naturally, the Arab public is worried by Oman's "special" relationship with the United States.

Judging by everything, Muscat is all for broader cooperation with Arab countries, primarily with its neighbours and partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council. Prompted by common sense and a desire for stability in the south of the Arabian Peninsula, Oman and neighbouring Democratic Yemen concluded an agreement on the normalization of relations in 1982 and resumed diplomatic relations in 1983.

As national and political awareness keeps growing and the desire to emerge from isolation onto the world scene becomes stronger, Oman displays a rising interest in the USSR and appreciation of its role in world affairs. "Oman thinks highly of the Soviet Union's foreign policy," information minister 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Rawwas said at a press conference in Muscat. "The Soviet Union has always supported the just struggle of the Arabs against the Israeli aggression and advocated a fair and early settlement of the Palestinian problem."

Oman's desire to have normal relations with the USSR materialized in an understanding to establish diplomatic relations reached on September 26, 1985. Accepting the credentials of the Soviet Union's first ambassador to Oman, Sultan Gabus said last May: "We hope that we will be able by joint efforts to establish most friendly relations, in line with the principles of peaceful coexistence recorded in international law."

The first page in the history of relations between the USSR and Oman has thus been opened and an important step taken to understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation.

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SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

SPECULATIONS ON CIRCUMSTANCES OF MACHEL'S DEATH EXPRESSED

Reason for Crash Questioned

PM030929 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 30 Oct 86 Morning Edition p 4

[L. Shinkarev report: "On the Plane Crash"]

[Text] Maputo--In their conversations many Mozambicans constantly come back to the subject of that Sunday evening on 19 October when, having left Lusaka and heading for Maputo, the Mozambican president's plane never reached its destination.

Samora Machel, chairman of the Frelimo Party and President of Mozambique, died and 33 of his companions with him--workers in party and state organs, diplomats, journalists, medics, the president's bodyguard, and crew members. Ten people survived, some of them seriously maimed. In these days of mourning, there is a question on the lips of millions of Mozambicans, which has been formulated by the newspaper NOTICIAS as follows: What actually happened in the skies of southern Africa--an accident or a crime?

The question is a legitimate one in the present situation, when the tragic event was preceded by the Republic of South Africa (RSA) unleashing a harsh anti-Mozambican campaign involving threats addressed to the republic's president and armed Mozambique National Resistance groups supported by the racist regime stepping up their actions on Mozambican territory. Was the president's TU-134 plane not the object of preplanned sabotage or attack?

Those who died included Yu. Novodran, crew commander and 1st class pilot, I. Karamyshev, second pilot, O. Kudryashov, navigator, and A. Shulipov, radio operator. They were all from Leningrad and each of them had more than 20 years aviation service behind them, including flying international routes and night flying. Having spent more than 1 year in Mozambique, the crew had made flights to Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Tanzania, and other countries on the continent. There is no airfield in Mozambique where the president's plane had not made a landing. Sometimes the Soviet pilots brought the plane down on a night landing strip lit only by burning barrels.

Engineer V.B. Novoselov was the only crew member to survive. He was taken to a military hospital in Pretoria in a serious condition.

Washington, Pretoria Involvement Alleged

PM051017 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 4 Nov 86 Morning Edition p 4

[B. Pilyatskin "International Commentary": "Pincers to Order from Washington"]

[Text] If any additional confirmation was needed that the United States is pursuing the "constructive engagement" policy with Pretoria by no means to pressure the apartheid regime and ease tension in the region but for directly opposite purposes, Washington has provided more than enough evidence of this in the last few days.

Mozambique, which has just paid its last respects to its leader Samora Machel, has become a target for overt blackmail and scare tactics.

Nobody has forgotten that Machel's tragic death was the culmination of a propaganda campaign of hysteria and rumbling tank tracks from South Africa and a considerable activation of the "Mozambique National Resistance Movement" (RENAMO) gangs sent in from South Africa. "Military intelligence," London's THE SUNDAY TIMES writes, "considers RENAMO to be the important 'eastern flank' of the destabilization strategy being conducted by South Africa. It is the equivalent of Jonas Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola in the west, and together they form a South African pincer movement."

The Mozambican people would have long since eliminated the bush terrorists if they had not received constant military and financial support from the South African special services and the CIA. As for U.S. participation, for tactical reasons for the time being it has not only not been advertised but has been covered up in every possible way and even denied. Now some people in the United States, seeking South Africa as a "historic ally"--as the White House incumbent once stated--consider the time is ripe to use RENAMO to implement a long-planned scenario for decoupling Mozambique from the other "frontline" countries and all its friends and allies and eliminating the people's revolutionary gains there.

An article published 30 October in THE WASHINGTON TIMES talks bluntly about the "favorable opportunity" for the United States to "end the conflict in Mozambique." In what way? Not standing on ceremony and seemingly "forgetting" that it is talking about a sovereign country, it prescribes virtually as an ultimatum that talks be begun with RENAMO in order to "form a coalition government," that assistance from fraternal Zimbabwe be rejected, and so on.

These musings in THE WASHINGTON TIMES fearing a terrible picture of "expansion of the Soviet empire" in southern Africa--with the help of "Cuban agents," of course--if the plan is not adopted could be put down to unbridled fantasy. However, very definite recommendations return us to the realities: If the U.S. demands are not fulfilled, the United States must immediately end

financial aid to Mozambique and press for Britain to do likewise, and--this is the main thing--it must give direct military support to RENAMO. Buoyed by this, the RENAMO bandits have not only considerably stepped up their propaganda activity in Western countries--in doing which they are obligingly assisted by certain mass media organs--but, emboldened, have declared... war on Zimbabwe.

The situation in southern Africa remains extremely tense. At the conference of "frontline" states in Maputo the participants expressed support for the Mozambican people in the struggle for their sovereignty and territorial integrity and stated their resolve to continue the struggle against racism and colonialism. This position is shared by all genuine friends of freedom-loving Africa.

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